ANTI-SLAVERY
MONTHLY REPORTER.

No. 60.] FOR MAY, 1830. [No. 12. Vol. iii.

The "ANTI-SLAVERY MONTHLY REPORTER" will be forwarded to any Anti-Slavery Society, at the rate of four Shillings per hundred, when not exceeding half a sheet, and in proportion, when it exceeds that quantity, on application at the Society's office, No. 18, Aldermanbury. Single Copies may be had of all booksellers and newsmen, at the rate of 1*d.* per half-sheet of eight pages.

I. ANTI-SLAVERY GENERAL MEETING: ITS OBJECT.

A General Meeting of the Anti-Slavery Society and its Friends will be held at Freemasons' Hall, Great-Queen Street, Lincoln's-Inn Fields, on Saturday the 15th Instant. The doors will be opened at Twelve, and the Chair will be taken by William Wilberforce, Esq., at One o'clock precisely. Tickets of admission may be had at the Society's Office, 18, Aldermanbury; Messrs. Hatchard and Son, 187, Piccadilly; Mr. Nisbet, 21, Berner's Street; Messrs. Seeley's, Fleet Street; and Messrs. Arch, 61, Cornhill.

The main object for which this meeting has been called by the Committee, is to announce to their constituents that, at the end of seven years of vain and illusory expectation, they have reluctantly come to the conclusion, that the only hope of success which now remains to them must proceed, under the blessing of God, from the earnest, concurrent, and persevering efforts of the British nation, to induce the Government and Parliament to carry at length into effect their solemn pledge, given in 1823, for the extinction of slavery throughout the dominions of His Majesty.

In the successive numbers of the Monthly Anti-Slavery Reporter, the circumstances which have led to this conclusion have been fully detailed; but a condensed view of them will be found in that for March last, (No. 58,) and in the following pages of the present number. To these sources of information we beg to refer the friends of our cause.

II. WEST INDIA COMMITTEE; ITS AVOWED HOSTILITY TO REFORM, AND ITS MISREPRESENTATIONS.

IN our last number (p. 188) we inserted the resolutions adopted, on the 24th February, by the committee of the West India body, the Marquis of Chandos in the chair. In these they boldly avow the identity of their own interests and feelings with those of the colonial legislatures, in whom they profess to place "implicit confidence," and in whose

recent measures of amelioration they recognise the combined influence of humanity and practical wisdom. The Committee disclaim, at the same time, having ever authorized, or concurred in, any proposition for what is called "compulsory manumission," in other words, for giving to the slave a right to purchase his own freedom or that of his offspring at a fair appraisement. They disclaim, that is to say, any measure however slow and progressive, which can afford the feeblest hope of terminating slavery at a period however distant.

Such is the unqualified avowal in 1830 of the existing Committee of the West India planters and merchants in London.

In the face, however, of this declaration, we are enabled to quote the repeated affirmations of Earl Bathurst, that the measures which, in his circular despatch of the 9th of July, 1823, he recommended to the adoption of the colonial legislatures, and afterwards embodied in the Trinidad order in council, (of which measures compulsory manumission formed a prominent part,) "*had received the concurrence and approbation of the majority of the individuals in England most deeply interested in the prosperity of the West Indies.*"* In the conference also to which on the 6th of July, 1829, a large deputation from the West India body, with the Marquis of Chandos at their head, was admitted by the Duke of Wellington, his Grace is stated to have reminded them that the measures of colonial reform recommended by Government in 1823, "had had the concurrence of a considerable portion of the West India body, including most of those he saw around him." This, we understand, was not denied by the deputation. They admitted that a majority of the standing committee of that period had, at the late Mr. Canning's request, agreed to furnish him with an enumeration of the particular measures of amelioration to which they could, without danger, consent, being those afterwards brought forward by him in the House of Commons on the 15th of May, 1823.† This statement derives ample confirmation from other circumstances.

When on the 15th of May, 1823, Mr. Canning explained to the House of Commons the intentions of Government on the subject of colonial reform, (prompted, as it now appears, by the West Indian Committee,) the whole of the West Indian gentlemen who spoke on that occasion expressed their concurrence. Mr. Ellis, now Lord Seaford, declared that to many of the proposed regulations, and particularly to the abolition of the driving-whip, of the flogging of females, of Sunday markets, and of Sunday labour; and to the allotment of equivalent time to the slaves in lieu of Sunday; as well as to the grant to them of legal rights of property, "*no objection would be offered on the part of the planters in the West Indies.*"‡ Mr. Marryat, at that time

* See official despatches of Lord Bathurst, of July 23d, 1824, to the Governor of Berbice; of July 24th, 1824, to the Governor of St. Lucia; and of 22d August, 1825, to the Governor of Tobago; contained in the papers laid by His Majesty's command before Parliament, viz. Papers for 1825, p. 229, and 254, and Papers for 1826, p. 99.

† We state this on the authority of letters said to be from members of the deputation, which have appeared in colonial newspapers.

‡ And yet to this hour, as we shall presently see, these measures are still rejected by the wisdom and humanity of the colonial legislatures, notwith-

the great champion of West Indian interests, expressed his approbation of Mr. Canning's proposals, in still more unqualified terms. "I am bound," he said, "to express *my most hearty concurrence* in the resolutions of the right honourable gentleman." (See substance of debate of 15th of May, 1823, printed for Hatchard, pp. 55 and 82.)

On a subsequent occasion, namely, on the 16th of March, 1824, when Mr. Canning laid on the table of the House of Commons a copy of the order in council for Trinidad, and explained at some length its leading provisions, and among them that for compulsory manumission, adding, that the Government held out this order as the model according to which they expected the colonial legislatures to frame their slave codes; Mr. Ellis alone, (now Lord Seaford) of all the West Indians then in the house, expressed any doubt as to the expediency of the manumission clause. By every other West Indian, who took part in that discussion, an unqualified approbation of the whole plan of the Government, without one specified exception, was either implied or distinctly expressed. Mr. Watson Taylor declared, "that the propositions of Mr. Canning had his most hearty concurrence: he concurred in the large and liberal views taken by Government." Mr. Manning thought "that the views of the Government were temperate and moderate. He was most anxious that the House should give effect to them." Mr. Thomas Wilson was of opinion that "the measures proposed by His Majesty's ministers were the best that could be devised to meet all difficulties." Mr. Baring also approved of them. (See the Times newspaper of the 17th of March, 1824.)*

It invalidates in no degree the effect of these statements, that the abolitionists should always have regarded the Trinidad order in council as essentially defective in its provisions. (See No. 58.)

But notwithstanding this general acquiescence of the West India body in England in the propriety of the reforms recommended by the Government, the colonial legislatures have, as if with one consent, and with scarcely an exception, rejected them. They have refused to adopt not the manumission clause alone, but almost every other meliorating provision of the Trinidad order, though thus unequivocally sanctioned at the time by the majority of the West India planters resident in this country.—They have made no legal provision for the education and religious instruction of the slave population by obliging masters to grant the requisite time and means for that purpose. With two exceptions, (Grenada and Tobago,) they have not prohibited Sunday mar-

---

standing this unhesitating promise of ready compliance given by the then Chairman of the West India Committee.

* If farther proof were necessary, it might be found in the fact, that the West India committee of 1826 adopted, on their list of publications for general circulation, two works which had it in view to vindicate the provisions of the Trinidad order from the objections of anti-slavery writers; one by Major Moody, entitled, "Considerations in defence of the Order in Council for the melioration of Slaves in Trinidad," being a series of letters which appeared in the Star newspaper, under the signature of Vindex; the other, a pamphlet professing the same general object, by Mr. Wilmot Horton, entitled, "The West India Question practically Considered."

kets, and even in these two excepted cases, the prohibition has been rendered nugatory by the refusal, (common to them with all the other colonial legislatures), to grant equivalent time to the slave during the week, in lieu of Sunday, either for the purpose of marketing, or for that of raising, for themselves and their families, the necessary food which they are now compelled to employ the Sunday in cultivating. Only by one of the legislatures (Grenada) has the testimony of slaves been admitted without restrictions which render the admission nugatory. By none has the marriage of slaves been duly facilitated and legalized, or the separation of families by sale been effectually prohibited, or their legal rights of property been adequately secured. By none has a proper record and return been required of those arbitrary punishments, whether by the cart-whip, the cat, or the stocks, which the master is still permitted by law to retain the tremendous power of inflicting, without revision or responsibility, for any offence, or for no offence. By none has the flogging of females, or the brutifying practice of driving the slaves to their work in the field been prohibited. By none have independent protectors of the slaves been appointed; and by none but one has the iniquitous law been altered by which black or coloured persons are presumed to be slaves, and, under the penalty of being reduced to slavery, may be put to the perilous proof of their freedom.

To the justice and expediency of these various measures of reform, the West India body at home had, from the year 1823 to the year 1826, either by their organs in Parliament, or by their standing committee, professed their assent. The colonial legislatures, however, have to this hour steadily refused, with a few rare exceptions, to adopt them. And yet, in 1830, the standing committee of this body have come forward to announce to the public their identity in interest and feeling with those very legislatures; to avow implicit confidence in their purposes and proceedings; and to laud the wisdom and the humanity which have guided their deliberations.

How is this singular inconsistency, on the part of the noblemen and gentlemen composing the standing Committee of the West India body, to be accounted for? Its composition may have somewhat varied. Lord Seaford has relinquished the chair to the Marquis of Chandos, and some names have been added to the Committee. Still it is difficult to understand the grounds of this complete revolution in the system of colonial tactics—this complete departure in 1830 from the pledges and assurances of 1823, 1824, and 1826,—this complete stultification of the professed views of the old Committee, by the recent annunciations and resolutions of the new.

It is in the view doubtless of obviating this objection, that the standing Committee have annexed to their resolutions, "An Abstract of the British West India Statutes for the Protection and Government of Slaves," which have been enacted subsequently to the resolutions of May 1823, and which they say, will shew "what the Colonial Legislatures have *actually done* towards the amelioration of slavery." p. v.

We hail the appearance of this abstract, thus lauded and thus authenticated; and we now proceed to shew, according to the pledge given in our last number, that it is "a gross imposition on the public;" a

most unfair though feeble attempt to pass off as genuine the spurious reforms of colonial legislation.

The Committee rest their cause first on the Jamaica Slave Code of 1826, which they represent as a greatly improved version of that of 1816. This last, they affirm, had "received unqualified approbation from many of His Majesty's Ministers." And the plain inference therefore is, that the Act of 1826 would have obtained still higher approbation in the same quarter but for "certain clauses limiting the operations of sectarian preachers," on account of which it was "disallowed by His Majesty's Government." *Abstract*. p. 1.

Now surely this, in the very outset, is a most unwarrantable representation of the facts of the case. So far was the Act of 1826, though affirmed to be an improved version of that of 1816, from obtaining, independently of its persecuting clauses, the unqualified approbation of His Majesty's Ministers, that, as the Committee are well aware, a great part of Mr. Huskisson's despatch, of the 22d September, 1827, is occupied in pointing out the gross and palpable defects of its most material provisions. Almost every sentence in that long and able despatch conveys a censure on the legislature of Jamaica, and convicts them of dispositions the very reverse of those for which the West India Committee are now giving them credit; nor can the force of that censure be weakened, or its point blunted, by a few complimentary phrases Mr. Huskisson may have used in the hope of allaying the irritation which the general tenor of his communication could not fail to produce.

"The following Abstract," say the standing Committee of the West India body, "of the *ameliorating* clauses of the act, as passed in 1826, sufficiently evinces the disposition of the Assembly of Jamaica to enlarge the privileges and to protect the persons of their slaves."—*Abstract*, p. 2.

Now, in opposition to this statement, we undertake to shew that this act might be more truly characterised by the injustice and inhumanity of many of its provisions, and by the designed inefficiency and inoperativeness of its pretended ameliorations; while nearly all the clauses of which Mr. Huskisson inadvertently praises the humane tendency are transcripts from old statutes, without any additional sanctions to render them operative, or to make them cease to be, what it is notorious they had ever been, a mere dead letter. But let us come to particulars. We shall first take in their order the six clauses which the Committee have classed under the head of "*Religious Observances*."

> 1st. "§. 3, Provides that the clergyman of each parish shall, on application, without fee or reward, baptize all slaves who can be made sensible of a duty to God and the Christian faith, in the which owners are to instruct them." *Abstract*, p. 2.

The clause of which this is the abstract, enacts as follows, "That all owners, &c., and in their absence overseers of slaves shall, as much as in them lies, endeavour the instruction of their slaves, in the principles of the Christian religion, whereby to facilitate their conversion, and shall do their utmost endeavour to fit them for baptism, and, as soon as conveniently can be, cause to be baptized all such as they can make sensible of the duty to God and the Christian faith, which ceremony the

clergymen of the respective parishes are to perform, when required, without fee or reward." Act of 1826, §. 3.

Any one who reads this clause in connection with the Committee's prefatory comment, would naturally suppose it to be one of the ameliorating measures by which the privileges of the slaves had been enlarged in compliance with the resolutions of May 1823. Instead of this, it is nearly a transcript of a clause in the slave law of 1696, which has been copied, with slight verbal variations, into every subsequent consolidated slave act, from that time to the present. See Act of 1696, §. 45; of 1788, §. 5; of 1816, §. 2; and of 1826, §. 3; the only material difference in all these versions of the clause being the addition, in the case of the last, of the words, "without fee or reward."

This clause therefore of the Act of 1826, for the framers of which the West India Committee would claim the credit of wisdom and humanity, has actually stood a dead letter in the Jamaica statute book for one hundred and thirty years. But by what magic power a clause which for so long a period had been wholly inoperative was to be endowed with efficiency on being re-enacted *totidem verbis* in 1826, they have not told us. They ought at least to have had to shew that in transferring the hitherto dead letter of this enactment from the old to the new statute, the legislature had evinced their humane purpose of amelioration by adopting some means for at length giving it vitality. But this was not their object. The clause was re-enacted with a view to its effect not in Jamaica but in Great Britain. Consequently not a single penalty was annexed to the neglect of its provisions, nor were any means prescribed, or any periods allotted, for their execution.—During the inquiry before the Privy Council in 1789, this clause was adverted to as standing on the Jamaica statute book; but the living witnesses who were questioned on the subject, namely the council of the island, Mr. Fuller the agent, Mr. Long, and Mr. Chisholm, all admitted that it had led to no results, and that no institutions whatever existed in that island by law for the instruction of the slaves. And to this very hour, the law remains in the same miserably defective state. It has provided no means for *securing* to the slave either education or religious instruction; the matter, though admitted in terms to be of the highest importance, being still left wholly to the hostile discretion of owners or overseers.

In his circular despatch of the 3d September 1828, Sir George Murray pointedly refers to this unsatisfactory state of things, and presses upon the colonial legislatures the NECESSITY of a change in that respect. It is, he says, "*necessary* that this important object should not be intrusted solely to individuals," (as is done in the above clause) "but that provision should likewise be made for it by law." No such provision however has yet been made in Jamaica, or indeed in any of our slave colonies. To exhibit such a clause as this therefore as fulfilling the obligations of the colonial legislatures, in respect to education and religious instruction,—what is it but "an imposition on the public?"

We have dwelt at greater length on this clause, in order fully to develope the studied delusion which will be found too often to characterise colonial legislation, especially in what relates to slavery. Even the grave and solemn enactment before us is so contrived as to delude

the ignorant into a belief of the humane and pious purposes of its framers. And yet *they* must have been conscious at the time that it could not but prove utterly inoperative, being left in its state of naked abstraction, without a single executory provision or a single sanction of any description.—In order to form a just estimate of the *humane* dispositions of colonial legislators, and of the encomiums lavished upon them by the standing committee of the West India body, we ought to contrast with the feebleness and inefficiency of their *ameliorating* enactments, the tremendous penal sanctions, and the prompt and energetic executory provisions, which await the delinquencies of the slave.

> 2d. "§ 4, That the said clergyman shall also, without fee, marry, with their owner's consent, any slaves who have been baptized and are desirous of contracting matrimony, if such clergyman shall, upon examination of the parties, consider them to have a proper and adequate knowledge of the obligation of such a contract." *Abstract*, p. 2.

Such is the substance of the tardy and reluctant enactment which the legislature of Jamaica condescended, for the first time, in 1826, to frame in respect to the marriage of slaves. Mr. Huskisson in his despatch of the 22d of September 1827, justly remarks upon it, 1st, that it provides no remedy against the capricious refusal of the owner's consent; 2d. that by confining the power of celebrating marriages to the clergy of the established church, every other class of religious teachers are deprived of the means of exercising a salutary influence on the minds of their disciples, and Roman Catholic priests of a right they enjoy by the common law; 3d, that the *necessity* of undergoing an examination by a clergyman as to their sense of the nature and obligations of the marriage contract is *not apparent*, and might prove a serious impediment to the formation of such connections, while the range of such an inquiry, embracing a large variety of considerations, can with difficulty be limited; and 4th, that no provision is made for any registry of slave marriages, or for a periodical return of them.

But even these objections of Mr. Huskisson to this illusory enactment are not all which may fairly be made to it.

What shall we say of the absurd and unprecedented provision which makes baptism a necessary preliminary to marriage? This is not required even in England. The marriages of Quakers, of the unbaptized children of Baptists, of Jews, &c. are as valid as any other. And why not? Or is it the *humane* and *moral* purpose of the Jamaica legislature that all who are not baptized shall be compelled to live in lawless concubinage; and that no marriages shall be valid but those of Church of England Christians?

Again, the legislature of Jamaica have entirely omitted that part of the recommendation of the Secretary of State which proposes to give legal validity to the marriages of slaves. The words of the Trinidad order are, that such marriages "shall to all intents and purposes be binding, valid, and effectual in the law." These words are omitted in the Jamaica act, and no words of equivalent force are substituted for them.

Mr. Huskisson, in his despatch, seems to assume that the Jamaica Assembly had really and honestly intended to facilitate, and to render legally valid, the marriages of slaves, but that they had blundered as to

the means of carrying their intentions into effect. But when all the circumstances of the case are attentively considered, it seems impossible to give them credit for any such intention. Whatever may be the *professed* aim of the clause, its *real* aim seems to have been not to encourage marriage, but to throw impediments in its way, and certainly in that aim it has succeeded: it has made the impediments sufficiently formidable. Another aim was doubtless to lead the English public to suppose that the colonists were at length disposed to give due encouragement and legal validity to slave marriages. We trust that what we have now said will dissipate this delusion.

3d. "§ 6. *Abolishes Sunday markets and shops* after eleven in the morning, excepting druggists and a few other cases *in conformity with the practice of England relative to the Sabbath.*" Abstract, p. 3.

This statement appears to us to involve another gross attempt to impose on the credulity of the public. The real effect of the clause, instead of being to *abolish* Sunday markets and shops, is in truth to *establish* and *legalize* them for nearly half the day. It actually constitutes and selects Sunday as the market day for the slaves, it being the only day allowed them by law for that purpose. And this, in West India phrase, is called *abolishing* Sunday markets! And this immoral and unchristian enactment is said, with a singular disregard of truth, to be "*in conformity with the practice of England relative to the sabbath.*" Its sanctity we admit, is too often violated; but surely it cannot be said that it is either the law or the practice of England that Smithfield or any other market, with all the shops around it, should be not only open on Sunday for all transactions of buying and selling, but that Sunday should be selected and specially fixed for that object, and should be the only day on which, from the state of the law, the bulk of the population possess the power of attending a market at all. And yet this is done by the *ameliorated* law of the Jamaica legislature, here held up to our admiration as a proof both of their humanity and of their wisdom.—The view we have taken of the subject seems in strict accordance with that of Mr. Huskisson. He says, in the despatch already referred to, "In the provisions for the due observance of Sunday, I remark, that the continuance of the market on that day till the hour of eleven, is contemplated as a permanent regulation. It is impossible, however, to sanction *this systematic violation of the law prevailing in every other Christian country.*" Yet such, we repeat, is the *ameliorating* provision which the *humane* dispositions of the Jamaica legislature have led them to enact, and which the *Christian* feelings of the standing committee of the West India body have led them to applaud.

4th. "§ 7. Prohibits *levies on slaves* on Saturdays, in order to enable them to attend religious duties on Sundays." *Abstract*, p. 3.

These words convey a strange, and apparently deliberate mystification and perversion of the facts of the case. To understand it properly, the reader ought to be aware that previous to 1824, on all days but Sunday, by the law of Jamaica, the slave, if found beyond the enclosures of his master's estate, might be seized and sold in execution for

the debts of his master—(another proof of the humanity of colonial legislation!) but the law since that time has been so far modified, that the exemption from arrest, formerly confined to Sunday, is now extended to Saturday also. This would, without doubt, have been both a necessary and a salutary measure, if the Saturday had been substituted for the Sunday as the market day; and if the law had secured the use and enjoyment of that day as a market day to the slave. But this has not been done. The exemption of the slave, therefore, from arrest on the Saturday, is no benefit to him, but solely to the insolvent master, so long as Sunday and not Saturday stands fixed by law as the market day; and so long as the master is under no legal obligation whatever to allot that day to the slave, but is left at full liberty to continue, as before, to compel him to labour in the field on that day as on other days, under the lash, from five in the morning till seven at night.

Here then we have another example of that studied and systematic deceptiveness in the work of legislation with which we have ventured to charge the colonial assemblies. This enactment, while it is attended with no inconvenience to the master, but may be productive of considerable benefit to him, enlarging at least *his* privileges though not those of the slave, may also serve the great object of all such pretended improvements, that of misleading the English public by its apparently beneficial tendency, and furnishing a topic of laudatory remark to the standing committee of the West India body. But it is perfectly obvious that, without further legislative provisions, it can yield no benefit to the slave, for whose advantage we are untruly told that it was designed. It was framed, say the West India committee, "in order to enable the slaves to attend religious duties on Sundays." Undoubtedly, if besides exempting them from arrest on Saturday, that day had been *given* to them, and had been also selected and fixed by law as the market day, such would have been its effect. But, like almost all the other pretended ameliorations of colonial law on the subject of slavery, it stops short at that point where the deception of the English public may be made compatible with the absence of all real improvement as respects the slave.

5th. "§ 9. Prohibits persons from employing the slaves of others on negro days or Sundays." *Abstract*, p. 3.

This prohibition, so far from being an ameliorating measure, inflicts a cruel hardship on the slave, preventing him from occupying his spare time in the service of such as will pay for it. It is a plan for enabling the owner to engross the time of the slave wholly for his own use, by putting it out of his power to carry his labour, his only possession, during the time nominally his own, to the best market. That it proceeds from no regard for the sanctity of the sabbath, and from no humane disposition to relieve the slave, will appear when we come to consider the next head of pretended amelioration.

6th. "§ 10. Directs that slaves shall not be compelled to work on Sundays even in crop time, and prohibits the mill being put about between 7 P. M., on Saturday, and 5 P. M. on Monday." *Abstract*, p. 3.

This is another gross misrepresentation of the clause of which the Committee profess to give an abstract. The clause is as follows:

"And be it enacted, that during the crop, not only shall the slaves, as *heretofore*, be exempted from *the labour of the estate or plantation* on Sundays, but that no mills shall be put about or worked between the hours of seven on Saturday night and five on Monday morning, under the penalty of twenty pounds." Act of 1826, § 10.

This, in the first place, is no *new* law, but a literal transcript of the 5th clause of the Act of 1816, and therefore cannot be considered as enlarging the privileges, or adding any further protection to the person of the slave.

The committee incorrectly represent the clause as prohibiting all compulsory labour on Sundays; whereas the prohibition extends only to the labour *of the estate or plantation*. In other words, the slaves are not to be compelled to perform field or plantation labour on that day. The noble and honourable members of the standing committee of the West India body, however, attempt to convey to the British public the unfair impression that this clause secures to the slave a complete exemption from compulsory labour of every kind on the Sunday, an impression, if it should be produced, which would be most unfounded. The Sunday is necessarily consumed by the slaves, in most of the colonies, in raising for themselves and their families the food with which the master, but for this cruel necessity which he imposes on the slaves, would be forced to supply them. The Sunday, therefore, is generally employed by the slaves in their provision grounds, and must, of necessity, be so employed if they would escape starvation. The proof of this fact will be found amply detailed in a note at p. 315 of our 2d volume, (No. 41.)—but for the sake of those who may not have ready access to that publication, we shall here extract one or two passages which will place the point beyond all legitimate doubt. We will not dwell on the testimony of persons unfavourable to the cause of slavery, such as the Rev. Mr. Bickell, the Rev. Mr. Cooper, and the Rev. Richard Watson in his admirable defence of the Methodist Missions.* We will refer to authorities wholly and properly West Indian.

Dr. Williamson resided fourteen years in Jamaica, a part of the time on an estate of Lord Harewood's, and shews himself, in his work on that island, a strenuous advocate for slavery; and yet, he there tells us, over and over again, that in Jamaica, Sunday is "a day of marketing and labour for the slaves, and of excess and brutal debauchery for the whites." See Vol. i. pp. 42, 108, and 331, and Vol. ii, pp. 235, and 287. Dr. Williamson returned to Jamaica, on the Medical Staff, in 1823, and in a letter of his now before us, written shortly before his death, in 1824, he confirms his former testimony respecting the Sunday as equally applicable to the latter period.

* "Sunday," say the missionaries, "is chiefly spent by the field negroes, *in working their own grounds, which is the source whence they derive their food*, or in bringing what little produce they may have to market: for *Sunday is the grand public market day.*" "On the sabbath," they add, "a driver with an overseer accompanies the slaves to the negro grounds given to them in lieu of allowance from their masters. *Here they spend the blessed sabbath toiling all day. This is their rest!*" Watson's Defence, published by Blanshard, pp. 59, 60. But even this testimony, decisive and unexceptionable as it is, we do not insist upon.

Mr. Stewart quitted Jamaica in 1821, after a residence of twenty years. He is the author of a "View of the past and present state of Jamaica," a work quoted as of authority by the colonists whose cause he zealously supports. In that work he thus apologises for the alleged inattention of the Jamaica clergy to the religious instruction of the slaves. "The truth is, that however willing *they* may be to perform their duty, *very few of the slaves have it in their power to attend Church. They are either in attendance on their owners, or their time is occupied in a* NECESSARY *attention to their own affairs; for Sunday is not a day of rest or relaxation to the plantation slave:* HE MUST WORK ON THAT DAY OR STARVE." p. 157.

The Hon. James Stewart, Member for Trelawney, the Father of the Jamaica Assembly, and himself a planter, is represented, in the Royal Gazette of that island, of the 3rd of June 1826, as thus addressing his constituents. "In respect to the instruction of the negroes in religion, it is not sufficient to build extra chapels for their accommodation. It is absolutely necessary, if we are sincere in our desire to improve their moral condition, that Sunday markets should be abolished altogether, and another day in the week allowed the negro *for the cultivation of his land*, and the sale of his provisions."

The only other witnesses we shall now adduce consist of the noblemen and gentlemen composing the standing West India Committee in London, from 1823 to 1828. They not only assented to the measures of putting an end to marketing and labouring in their grounds on the Sunday, and of giving equivalent time to the slaves on other days for that purpose; but they themselves, in 1823, actually proposed these measures to the Government as fit to be adopted; and in recommending them to the colonial legislatures, Mr. Canning and Lord Bathurst professed to follow, and did, in fact, follow their suggestions And yet, in 1830, the same Committee, with the Marquis of Chandos as their chairman in the room of Lord Seaford; seven years having passed without one effective effort on the part of the colonial legislatures to apply a remedy to the admitted evil; are now found conspiring with those refractory legislatures to delude the people of England into a belief that their humanity had really accomplished its cure. The people of England, however, will now see, that notwithstanding this disingenuous attempt, to give it no harsher name, the slaves of these very persons, the Noble, and Honourable, and Right Honourable Members of the West India Committee, are still left by law without a Sabbath, no equivalent time being get given to them in lieu of it; are still left, after a week of forced labour in the cane piece under the cart-whip, to toil, throughout the whole of that sacred day, in raising for themselves and their families the food which the masters ought to supply, or in carrying the surplus produce so raised to the next market.

Have we not, we confidently ask, in these statements, established an aggravated case of "imposition on the public," against this body of slaveholders?

We have now gone through the whole of the alleged ameliorations in Jamaica, which are classed under the head of "Religious Observances;" and we think we must have satisfied every candid man who has accom-

panied us thus far, that we have made good our charge. The reader will see, by turning to a preceding page, (190,) that there were certain proposed reforms, to which Lord Seaford pledged himself that "no objection would be offered, on the part of the planters *in* the West Indies." Of some of these, namely, the abolition of Sunday markets and Sunday labour, and the grant to the slave of additional time for these purposes in lieu of Sunday, the fate has been already seen. Three others remain to be noticed, namely, 1st, the abolition of the cruel and indecent practice of arbitrarily flogging females; 2nd, the disuse of the driving whip in the field; and 3rd, the granting to the slaves legal rights of property. Let us inquire whether, on the shewing of the Committee itself, the Noble Lord's pledge as to each of these measures has been redeemed.

1st. As to the abolition of female flogging, nothing has been done, nor do the West India Committee state that any thing has been done, by the legislature of Jamaica. A proposal, indeed, was made in the House of Assembly, to introduce a clause into the Act of 1826, not for prohibiting the flogging of women, that would have been too daring a proposition, but that in flogging them there should be no *indecent* exposure; but even this was rejected by a large majority of 28 to 12.*

2nd. The disuse of the driving-whip in the field was a measure too bold to be even proposed to the Jamaica Assembly in 1826. The utmost length to which the most sensitive humanity dared to go, was to move that the cat should be substituted for the cart-whip, both in the coercion of labour in the field, and in the infliction of regular punishments. But even this motion, by a similar majority to that last mentioned was rejected. "If we adopt such an innovation," said one Member, "on the established usages of the colony, the slaves will imagine that our conduct has been disapproved of by the King, and that we have been compelled to relinquish the cart-whip, and with it every means of punishment and restraint." To this it was replied by Mr. Barrett, whose speech excited much indignant clamour in the House, "You are told, that to abolish the cart-whip is an innovation. It is, indeed, an innovation; so was the abolition of the rack and the thumb screw, and such like instruments, the fellows of the cart-whip. But I have yet to learn that these innovations have undermined the civil institutions of Europe. I do not hesitate to declare, that the cart-whip is a base, cruel, debasing instrument of torture, a horrible, detestable instrument, when used for the punishment of slaves. I do say that *thirty-nine* lashes with this horrid instrument can be made more grievous than *five hundred* lashes with the cat." Again, "You say that a greater number of lashes are inflicted by the cat in the army than are allowed to be given by the cart-whip. But how are the former inflicted?

* The flogging of females has been prohibited by none of the colonial legislatures. In three or four of the colonies their *indecent* exposure, when undergoing punishment, is forbidden; but what *indecent* exposure may mean, in the vocabulary of negro drivers, it may be difficult to say. The account given by the West India Committee of the Barbadoes law is as follows. "Female slaves to be punished in a private and decent manner, and when pregnant to be punished by confinement only," in the stocks we presume. The idea of subjecting pregnant females to plantation discipline is quite peculiar, we presume, to slave colonies.

Not at the caprice, at the will, at the passion or rage of an individual; but after a solemn trial by a court-martial, where the members with calmness deliberate on the charge brought against the offender. But the punishment of the cart-whip is inflicted at the pleasure of an individual, at his sole command, as caprice or passion dictates. Sometimes one slave inflicts it upon another. Sometimes it is ordered by the bookkeeper, or overseer, or proprietor of the lowest order, men too frequently most unfit to apportion punishment."

This striking extract refers more immediately to the use of the cart whip as an instrument of punishment than as used to stimulate labour in the field. Still even in this latter capacity it is a tremendous instrument of torture, tending also completely to debase the human gang to the level of the brute team.*

3d. We now come to the last point on which Lord Seaford ventured to assure parliament that no objection would be offered by the planters in the West Indies, namely granting to the slaves legal rights of property. On this point the attempts of the West Indian committee to delude the public are at least as remarkable as any we have yet specified. Their statement as respects Jamaica is in the following terms.

> "§ 15. (it ought to be § 16,) Recognizes the right of slaves to *personal property*, and gives to it a *further* protection than that of free persons, by inflicting a penalty of 10*l.* on the person trespassing on it, in addition to the value to be summarily recovered."—*Abstract*, p. 4.

To understand all the deliberate unfairness of this pretended abstract, it will be necessary to quote the clause as it stands in the act. It is as follows:—

"§ 16. And whereas by the usage of this island, slaves have always been permitted to possess personal property, and it is expedient that such laudable custom should be established by law, be it therefore enacted that if any owner, possessor, or any other person whatsoever, shall wilfully or unlawfully take away from any slave or slaves, or in any way deprive or cause to be deprived, any slave or slaves of any species of personal property by him, her, or them lawfully possessed, such person or persons shall forfeit and pay the sum of ten pounds over and

---

* Some of the evasive enactments of the smaller colonies on the subject of the driving whip would be amusing, if the subject were not of so serious a description; and yet the West India Committee holds them out as proofs of the humanity of the colonial legislatures. For example, Nevis, St. Kitts, Dominica, and St. Vincent prohibit only the cart whip in the field, but allow the use of the cat or any other instrument. Grenada prohibits it only in the hand of a slave, leaving it free to be used by all who are not slaves. The conduct of the Barbadoes legislature is at least more open and manly. On the 23d of October 1826, they informed the Governor, Sir Henry Warde, that "they found they could not yield to Lord Bathurst's recommendation to prohibit the punishment of women by flogging and the use of the whip in the field." The former, they say, "would in the judgment of the Assembly, be productive of the most injurious consequences" —and "considerations not less powerful have prevailed with them respecting the disuse of the whip in the field," which they add, "is considered by them to be inseparable from a state of slavery."—On the conduct of Barbadoes in this respect the Committee say nothing. The gross evasions in the other colonies are actually brought forward as proofs of the humane dispositions of their legislatures.

above the value of such property taken away as aforesaid, the same to be recovered under the hands and seals of any three justices of the peace before whom the complaint shall be laid and the facts proved."

In Great Britain theft and robbery are *crimes* in the eye of the law, and are punished either as larceny or felony, as the case may be. The law of Great Britain on this point is also the law of Jamaica in what respects free persons. If *they* are plundered of their property the perpetrator of the theft or robbery is criminally prosecuted, and, if found guilty, is visited with an infamous punishment. But this clause, while it falsely pretends to recognise a right of property in slaves, and to grant even *further* protection to their property than is allowed to that of free persons, does in fact deprive them of their only sure protection by converting the infamous punishment with which theft or robbery is visited in all other cases, into a trifling pecuniary mulct of six or seven pounds sterling. By this insidious clause therefore we have a revolution effected in the laws of theft and robbery as they respect the slave's property, which would be utterly fatal to the security of his rights, if he possessed any. But he possesses none, and this clause, we affirm, gives him none. The preamble indeed is sufficiently imposing. It recognizes the *laudable custom* of *permitting* slaves to possess *one* species of property, and admits the expediency of establishing such custom by law. And what is the lame and impotent enactment which follows? Not, as was recommended by Lord Bathurst, and prescribed in the Orders of Council for the Crown Colonies, that "slaves shall be competent to purchase, acquire, enjoy, alienate, or bequeath property to any amount, or of any description, (except slaves, boats, arms and ammunition) or to bring, prosecute, or defend any action in any court of justice, in respect to such property, in the same manner as if he were free." No! Nothing of this kind follows. The legal right of property which the legislature profess to deem it expedient to confer on the slave is not given to him. It is said to be expedient to give it—but still it is not given. The only enactment which follows this imposing and deceptious preamble, is one affixing a small pecuniary penalty to the infamous and criminal act of robbing a slave of his property. But then it must be property which a slave *lawfully* possesses. But how is a slave to be *lawfully* possessed of property? The report recently made by Mr. Henry and Mr. Coneys, on the state of the law in Jamaica (dated June 29, 1827,) tells us that "slaves are not entitled to sue or subject to be sued in any civil action"—and that in case of a proprietor interfering with the property of a slave, "the slave has no legal remedy"—"a sufficient reason," observes the attorney-general of the island, "for sanctioning *by law* his undisturbed possession," p. 82. The evidence of Mr. Dwarris as repects the other islands is to the same effect, (see vol. ii. p. 242, No. 37,) namely, that a slave possesses no property in the eye of the law, nor any rights connected with property. Now certainly the clause before us confers no such rights upon him. Therefore the qualification here introduced, that the property to which the penalty is to attach must be property *lawfully* possessed, is only another illustration of the worthlessness of these pretended ameliorations, as well as a proof of the care taken by their framers to render

them worthless. It is not at all shewn what it is for a slave to be *lawfully* possessed of property, or how he is to prove this preliminary condition. No means of suit are given him, even in the case against which alone the clause pretends to provide, or for the recovery of debts owing to him; and he is debarred, be it remembered too, in Jamaica by this very act, from giving evidence in any *civil* matters whatever. In short the whole provision is worse than nugatory; it is a mere mockery, a fraud on the poor slave, and a gross imposition on the British public. And such seems to have been the clear opinion of Mr. Huskisson in his letter of 22d September 1827. "The property of slaves," he says, "is left by this law in an unprotected state. No action is given to them, or to any person on their behalf, for the defence or recovery of it. The single case in which any remedy is provided, is that in which the property of the slave is taken away. No mention is made of that much more important class of cases in which property is withheld. The slave could not under this law recover a debt, nor obtain damages for the breach of a contract. The mode of proceeding for penalties before three justices of the peace, is a remedy to which hardly any one would resort, for the act does not give the amount of the penalty, if recovered, to the injured party; and the slave himself could not make the complaint, except upon the condition of receiving a punishment if the justices should deem it groundless. The slaves are also excluded by the terms of this law from acquiring any interest in land; a restriction which would appear at once impolitic and unnecessary."

Again, the committee tell the public that clause 16 (it ought to be 17) of this act "Recognises the *right* of slaves to receive bequests of personal property," *Abstract*, p. 5. It would have been but common honesty to have added the proviso annexed to the clause, and which goes to nullify this pretended right. The words are, "Provided always that nothing herein contained shall be deemed to authorise the institution of any action or suit at law or in equity, for the recovery of such legacy, or to render it necessary to make any slave a defendant in a suit of equity."*

Having now disposed of the various particulars of Lord Seaford's abortive pledge on behalf of the planters in the West Indies, we shall advert to one or two other clauses in this imposing abstract, which are exhibited by the committee as ameliorating provisions, and which will farther assist the public in judging of the views and feelings of that body.

> "§ 26. (it stands 27 in the Act) Slaves to have half an hour for breakfast, and two hours for dinner; nor to be compelled to field labour before five in the morning, or after seven at night, except during crop, under penalty of £50." *Abstract*, p. 3.

This clause, as it stands in the Act of 1826, is a literal transcript of the 20th clause of the Act of 1816, and of the 18th clause of the Act of 1788; so that in this important point of the extent and continuity of

* The same general remarks which have been suggested by the Jamaica clause, on the subject of property, will be found to apply with slight variations to the enactments of almost all the other Colonial legislatures.

labour, there has no alteration been made in favour of the slave during upwards of forty years, though the West India committee would exhibit it as the fruit of the humanity of the actual colonial legislatures; as a proof, to use their own words, of their disposition to expunge all harsh and unnecessary "enactments, which the policy of an earlier period rendered imperative," and "to enlarge the privileges and protect the person of the slave." And yet the law of 1826 exacts from the slave the same continuity of toil which was exacted from him in 1788.

Of this vaunted meliorating provision, however, which the committee untruly tells us had, among others, received the unqualified approbation of many of His Majesty's ministers, Mr. Huskisson finds himself compelled, on the 22d September, 1827, thus to write:—

"The provisions for the *prevention* of excessive labour," (the words seem almost ironical!) "contemplate the working of the slaves for *eleven hours and a half* daily out of crop, and place no limit to the continuance of their work during crop time. Considering the climate in which this labour is to be performed, and that after the work of the field is over, there will yet remain to be done many offices, not falling within the proper meaning of the term labour, I should fear that the exertion of the slaves, if exacted up to the limits allowed by this law, *would be scarcely consistent with a due regard for the health of the labourer.*"

But Mr. Huskisson, though he wrote under an impression of the very great severity of this enactment, evidently did not know the whole of the case, or he would hardly have expressed himself so feebly respecting its enormity. To these eleven hours and a half of daily labour in the field, under a tropical sun, and the lash of the driver, which so justly shocked the Secretary of State, is to be added half the night for from four to six months of the year during crop. There is also to be added the time required for preparing for the field in the morning; for going thither and returning thence at noon; for going again in the afternoon and returning home at night; and for the different domestic offices which, of necessity, are daily recurring, such as preparing and cooking food, collecting fuel, care of children, washing, &c. &c. Besides all this, on most of the plantations, after the field labour is over, the slaves, before they can repair to their own homes, have to undergo the heavy and oppressive task of collecting a large bundle of fodder for the cattle or horses, and waiting with it at the pen or stables till the whole gang is again collected and the roll called over; a task which, after a fatigning day's labour in the field, is of a most vexatious and harassing kind, materially injuring their health, and giving occasion to frequent punishments. So that in the time of crop, upwards of eighteen hours, and, on the average of the year, not less than from fifteen to sixteen hours a day are necessarily consumed either in the master's immediate service, or in necessary labour connected with it. And this excessive continuity of labour which is exacted alike from the women as from the men, we have proved, and are again ready to prove, from unquestionable official documents, to be the prevailing practice in the British sugar colonies. (See vol. ii. pp. 157 and 212, and No. 58, p. 143 and 144.)

Under such a system of oppressive exaction, can we wonder at the continued waste of the slave population which is taking place in our sugar colonies; so that while the free blacks and people of colour, and among them the Maroons of Jamaica, are rapidly increasing; while in the United States the very slaves double their numbers in less than thirty years, and the free blacks of Hayti in a considerably shorter period; among the British slaves employed in growing sugar, there should not only be no increase, but on the contrary, a very considerable annual diminution. Nor ought the misery thus occasioned, to be measured merely by the excess of deaths over births, but by the constant pressure on the animal frame, arising not only from the intensity of the labour exacted, under a tropical sun, by the stimulating power of the cartwhip, but from its continuity for a number of hours in each day which in no climate could be endured without suffering and exhaustion, disease and death. But neither on this grand source of mortality, nor on another scarcely less fatal, the scantiness of the supply of food, can we, at present, enlarge. We must hasten to another topic.

The West India Committee produce, as a further proof of the humanity of the colonial legislatures, a clause, which they number 36, (instead of 37,) and which they have thus abstracted.

> "Slaves not to receive more than ten lashes, except in presence of owner or overseer, &c., nor in such presence more than thirty-nine, nor until recovered from former punishment, under penalty of £20." *Abstract*, p. 5.

But let us give the clause as it appears in the Act of 1826, being in no respect different from the corresponding clauses in the Acts of 1788 and 1816: "§. 37. And IN ORDER TO RESTRAIN ARBITRARY PUNISHMENTS, be it further enacted, that no slave, on any plantation or settlement, or in any of the workhouses or gaols in this island, shall receive ANY MORE than TEN LASHES at one time and for one offence, unless the owner, attorney, guardian, executor, administrator, or overseer, of such plantation or settlement, having such slave in his care, or keeper of such workhouse, or keeper of such gaol shall be present; and that no such owner, attorney, guardian, executor, administrator, or overseer, workhouse-keeper, or gaol-keeper, shall, on any account, punish a slave with more than THIRTY-NINE LASHES at one time and for one offence, nor inflict, nor suffer to be inflicted, such last-mentioned punishment, nor any other number of lashes on the same day, nor until the delinquent has recovered from the effect of any former punishment, under a penalty not less than ten pounds, nor more than twenty pounds, for every offence," &c.

Such is the law passed by the *humane* and *enlightened* legislature of Jamaica, in December, 1826, and which is applicable to every slave, man, woman, or child in that island. By that law the *driver*, or any quasi driver, may inflict ten lashes;—and the owner and overseer, nay, the gaol-keeper and workhouse-keeper, the attorney, guardian, and administrator may, each and every one of them, inflict thirty-nine lashes of the CART-WHIP, on the bare posteriors of any and every slave, man, woman, or child he has charge of, without a trial, without the order of a magistrate, for no defined offence, but merely because he (the

owner, &c.) is offended; nor can he, *by any law*, be called to answer for such conduct. Nay, the clause is so framed as to protect him effectually against all responsibility for so doing. And yet, in mockery, as it were, the object of this clause is said to be to RESTRAIN ARBITRARY PUNISHMENTS!

Let the reader now turn to Mr. Barrett's description of the horrid cart-whip, as given above, (p. 200,) and then learn to do homage to the humanity which dictated to the legislators of Jamaica the re-enactment of such a clause; and to the Marquis of Chandos, and his associates of the West Indian Committee, their approbation of it as "salutary and humane," as calculated "to enlarge the privileges and to protect the persons of their slaves." *Abstract*, p. 1 and 2.

We shall not think it necessary to tire our readers by going further into an analysis of this Abstract at present. If circumstances should require it, we shall not shrink from the task of resuming it, and we pledge ourselves before hand, that if we should be compelled to do so, we shall find no more difficulty in exposing the illusory and deceptive nature of all the other alleged ameliorations, than we have had in the case of those which, on this occasion, we have been led more particularly to notice; for with respect to the whole of this Abstract, though promulgated and sanctioned by such high authority, we repeat, unhesitatingly and confidently, that it is "a gross imposition on the public."

We could have wished, before we closed this article, to have adverted to the persecuting clauses of the Act of 1826, which, we understand, have been re-enacted, with aggravations, in a new edition of it which has recently received the sanction of the Governor of Jamaica; as well as to the cruel persecutions, which, during the last two years, the Missionaries, especially those of the Wesleyan Methodists, have been enduring in that island. But we must defer to another opportunity this pregnant topic, a topic not inferior in interest even to the case of the martyred Smith. But a time is coming when these deeds of darkness will be dragged into light, and assist in more firmly fixing the public determination to put a final period to a system so fruitful of crime, so alien from the genius of our constitution, and so utterly repugnant to the benign spirit of the Religion of Christ, as that which now unhappily prevails in the slave colonies of Great Britain.

"In conclusion, let us remember," as we ventured to observe on a former occasion, "that the laws of which we have been giving an account, are not obsolete statutes, the relics of a barbarous age, but they are laws recently framed by men calling themselves Britons, and who, instead of feeling that such laws outrage every principle of justice and every feeling of humanity, actually hold them forth as instances of enlightened and beneficent legislation. And if the laws themselves be, as they are, a CRIME, what must be their administration in the hands of the men who framed them, and who do not blush to boast of them."

How long shall such abominations be endured by a nation calling itself Christian?

III. Hayti and Mr. Mackenzie.

Mr. Consul General Mackenzie has published two volumes of Notes on Hayti, made during his residence in that Republic; and he has prefaced them by a vehement attack on the Anti-Slavery Reporter, No. 55, against which he brings very heavy charges, such as, "coarse vulgarity and impudent falsity," "dishonesty," "flagrant misrepresentations of facts," "garbled quotations," "much passion and little reason,"—calling forth alternately, his "pity and contempt," and evincing the "sordid mendacity" of "the skulking libeller" that framed it, who shews himself superior "to all sense of shame," and on whom "refutation on refutation would be perfectly unavailing." He declines, therefore, under such circumstances, to engage in a contest with "an anonymous assailant," fearing also, as he says he does, lest, "by the warmth into which he might be betrayed in repelling ungentlemanly impertinence," he should expose himself to be suspected of being a partisan.

To this refined, modest, calm, gentlemanly, and pertinent vindication, all we have now to say in reply is, that having carefully perused his "Notes on Hayti," we can find nothing in them which requires that we should retract a single syllable of the remarks on his official report, in our 55th number, which have roused the ire of Mr. Mackenzie. On the contrary, we find those remarks confirmed and substantiated by his more recent communication, as we may take an early opportunity of shewing. In the mean time we would merely observe, that Mr. Mackenzie has adopted a very *prudent* and *safe* method of repelling what he calls our imputations. After ransacking the English vocabulary for vituperative expressions which prove nothing except his "much passion and little reason," he omits to specify a single point in which we have misrepresented either his statements or his opinions. From this necessity, it is true, he endeavours to release himself by pleading that the imputations are anonymous. But though the imputations are anonymous, yet the testimony on which they rest is not anonymous. Their whole force depends on that testimony, and could not have been either strengthened or weakened by the name of the collator of it. Now to that testimony Mr. Mackenzie, at least, is bound to defer; for it is the testimony of Mr. Mackenzie himself. It is from his own communications alone, accurately quoted, that the statements are drawn which appear to us to convict him of unfairness, prejudice, and inconsistency; and though he may not condescend to reply to the anonymous commentator on those statements, he may, at least, without any sacrifice of consular dignity, condescend to reconcile, if they can be reconciled, his own apparent contradictions, and the extraordinary discrepancies occasionally existing between his own premises and his own conclusions. This is the task to which we challenge him. It is one which he owes it to his own fame not to decline, and from the necessity of which no vehemence of unsupported accusation, which he may employ, can possibly exempt him, however it may enhance that necessity. We decline to contend with Mr. Mackenzie in the war of illusive epithets, but shall there leave him to enjoy his superiority. If,

however, he will point out any one instance of misrepresentation, either of the facts he has stated, or of the opinions he has hazarded, of which he thinks he has reason to complain, we pledge ourselves that it shall be either vindicated or retracted. One thing, indeed, we will not promise, and that is, to part with the conviction which his Report first forced upon us, and which his Notes have since abundantly confirmed, that he is the cordial and determined enemy of Haytian, or to speak more properly, of negro freedom.*

IV.—The Jamaica Watchman.

The recent conduct of the Jamaica Legislature, respecting the claims of the free coloured classes in that island, will serve to illustrate the governing principle which dictates all their measures of professed reform, namely, to find the minimum of real and effective concession which can be made compatible with an apparent deference to public opinion in this country. On this principle they have passed an Act, which professes, that "it is expedient to grant additional privileges to coloured and black persons of free condition." The Act commences with granting the elective franchise to all of these classes who shall possess freeholds in towns of the annual value of £100. or out of towns of the annual value of £50., or a rent charge of £100. a year, and shall also pay taxes to the amount of £10. a year; and those who become entitled, by such a qualification, to the elective franchise, shall enjoy the rights and privileges of whites. It is provided, however, that no such coloured or black persons shall be capable of filling offices for which they were before incapacitated, unless thus qualified to vote at elections; and that none of them shall have "any power, capacity, or ability, of sitting or voting either in the Council or the Assembly of the island." The hardship of this Act consists in not merely this last exclusion of all free

---

* The above is only one of several attacks on the Anti-Slavery Reporter, which the last month has produced. It would be endless to notice them all; but another, entitled, "A Letter to the Marquis of Chandos, by a West India Planter," deserves to be distinguished for the ludicrous variety of its topics, and the recklessness of its misrepresentations. It ranges through a controversy of forty years duration, and in the space of 70 or 80 pages touches on almost every subject which, in that time, has had the remotest connexion with it. But like Mr. Mackenzie, he wisely avoids, in his statements, all tangible specification. At p. 30, for example, he accuses the Anti-Slavery Reporter of the unprincipled artifice of promulgating stories of great cruelty and atrocity, which *nine times out of ten*, turn out to be mere fabrications of its conductors, who, when detected, care not for the exposure, but only proceed to get up other stories equally false and fabricated. He might at least have named from the mass, some one story, or some one page of the Anti-Slavery Reporter, in support of this vague statement. We can discover no stories to have been promulgated there which do not rest either on official or West Indian authority. If there be, let them be pointed out, and the chapter and verse be given.—This writer also carefully withholds from his readers the means of ascertaining the fidelity of his quotations. We can find, for example, no such words in Mr. Mackenzie's Report as he has formally professed to quote from it in a note at p. 19, and there is, throughout the pamphlet, the same defect, so as to bid defiance to all attempt at examination, or collation.

coloured and black persons, whatever be their property and their capacities in other respects, but the requiring of them a qualification of ten times the amount which is required of white persons, (the freehold qualification of a white being £10. a year), and also the excluding them from a variety of civil offices and ordinary employments, unless they possess this high qualification. They exclude, that is to say, from offices and employments, the very persons who stand most in need of them.

The people for whose benefit this Act professes to be passed, exclaim loudly against its injustice. They complain of it as insidiously and deceptively affecting liberality, while, in fact, it involves the same principle of exclusion and degradation which has hitherto characterised the treatment of their class by the dominant party. The following extracts from the *Watchman* will shew the feelings with which it has been received by them.

" The people of colour," they say, " have too long been made the dupes of an inhuman policy. Their expectations have been raised merely, it would appear, to afford the gratification of disappointing them, and they have been taunted, tantalized, and insulted into a spirit which, if not met by measures of a different kind, must produce serious consequences." " If the Jamaica legislature is determined to perpetuate their bondage, let them" (the people of colour,) " come forward at once and give the pledge," (meaning a pledge to aid the British Ministry and nation in their views respecting the extinction of slavery,) " and thus the question of *their disabilities* will not only be for ever set at rest, but a period be decided upon when the odious and brutalizing system of slavery shall also be brought to a close. It is to this they" (the people of colour,) " must come at last, and the man who would refuse to purchase the privileges of a Briton at so cheap a rate, is unworthy of the name, and undeserving of the immunities he now claims." *Watchman* of 10th Feb. 1830.

Again :—

" The system of slavery is a deplorable one. It debases, demoralizes, and sinks man to a level with the brute. The abject wretchedness of the unfortunate slave is only contrasted by the petulant tyranny of his master ;—this petulance and this tyranny he fancies himself entitled to manifest to, and exercise over, every man whose complexion is not *white*. Accustomed as he is to lord it with a high hand over his black and coloured slaves, he considers himself equally entitled to domineer over the black and the coloured freemen ; hence, has arisen the contempt and contumely with which they have been, and will continue to be treated, so long as slavery exists.

" The people of colour, then, if they really wish to rise in the scale of society, must lend their assistance to the British Ministry and Nation, in putting an end to this crying evil. To the Legislature " (of Jamaica) " they need not look ; a thousand instances of political treachery on their part must, ere this, have satisfied the most sceptical on this head. Do the people of colour generally, or any portion of them, consider the recent measures as having originated from a conviction of the justness of their claims, or from an opinion that they are deserving of the immunities nominally said to be extended to them ? We know they do not.

They are, every one of them, aware that *expediency* alone has induced the *appearance* of liberality; and that they have only *pretended* to give in order to prevent its being granted more freely and fully by another and a higher power. Is not the gross and disgusting abuse, heaped upon them by some of the very men who pretended to advocate their claims, a strong proof that although, for a time, their prejudices were compelled to yield to necessity, still, like oil, it floated upon the surface whilst every sentence uttered to shew the necessity of such a measure was accompanied by another indicative of their dislike and mortification.

"We are aware that the expression of sentiments such as these will draw down upon us the envy, hatred, and malice of the greater portion of the Jamaica *aristocracy*. It is too well known that to entertain, but particularly to express, liberal sentiments, or to denounce, however mildly, the abominable system to which we have alluded, is considered, by the generality of the white inhabitants, as a crime never to be forgiven either here or hereafter. But we care not what opinion such men entertain. Our object is to do justly and act uprightly, determined to judge every man, not by his complexion or by his creed, but by his conduct! 'By his fruit ye shall know him,' is the declaration of one who was too wise to err; and by this touchstone shall be tried every one with whom we may have to do.

"That every good man is entitled to a participation in civil rights, is a dogma few will dispute; that any man, on account of complexional or religious differences, ought to be excluded from those rights, none but the most narrow-minded and illiberal will contend; nor can we ever hope to become thoroughly united and happy till every good subject enjoys equal civil privileges, without any regard to complexion or religious opinions. If a man be a peaceable, industrious, moral and religious person, and an obedient subject to the Civil Government under which he lives, let his religious views of things be what they may, he seems to have a just claim to the enjoyment of every office, privilege, and emolument of that government; and, till this is the case, there never can be a settled state of things. *There will be an eternal enmity between the governing and the governed, an everlasting struggle for superiority.* But when every member of the State enjoys equal privileges with its other members, the bone of contention is removed, and there is nothing for which they should any longer be at enmity."

"The conduct of the Legislature with regard to the coloured Bill has been of a piece with their usual short-sighted policy, and is perfectly well understood by the persons of colour generally."—"They perceive that while the Bill *nominally* extends to them every franchise, it *actually* gives them none; and under that conviction they have determined to petition His Majesty to withhold his sanction from an Act which, if brought into operation, could only be viewed as calculated to add insult to injury." *Watchman* of 17th July, 1830.

In the succeeding *Watchman*, that of the 20th February, "a coloured slaveholder" addresses his fellow-slaveholders in the following energetic terms.

"We are called upon by the Government and united people of a mighty nation—by the voice of justice and humanity—*by the Law of*

God! to raise our dependants from a level with the brute to the station of men—to dissipate, by the stimulating influence of hope, the gloomy, half-despairing recklessness which characterises the reflecting portion of the class, and to induce them to employ, in pursuits beneficial to themselves and society, talents and energies which, in their present moral and political condition, are, like sharp weapons in unskilful hands, injurious to themselves and dangerous to those about them.

"Remember that upon your present conduct depends the security of your property and the safety of your families! Obtain, then, the good opinion of Government; express your willingness to join in measures, which may emanate from them, having for their object the welfare of the island. Place your dependance on the British Parliament, and rest assured that you will not be disappointed, and that you will have no cause to regret having done so. Prove, by your readiness to meet the views of Ministers, that loyalty the most undeviating, and attachment the most sincere, to the illustrious House of Hanover is not, within the pale of his Majesty's dominions, to be found so predominant as in the bosom of the coloured slaveholder."

We will extract only one more passage. It is taken from a newspaper, published at Montego Bay, called *The Struggler*, which, it also appears, is conducted by persons of colour.

"It has been intimated to us, that a meeting of the Coloured Freeholders of this parish will be convened for Monday next, to take into their consideration the expediency of petitioning the King in Council, to withhold the Royal Assent from the 'Brown Privilege Bill,' as well as to consider of the propriety of giving a distinct pledge of their willingness to promote the views of His Majesty's Ministers, in the adoption of some system for the gradual abolition of slavery, as the best mode of obtaining the confidence and support of the British Government, and securing their admission to the rights of British subjects.

"We understand that several of the *wiseacres* of this parish ridiculed the intention we adverted to on Tuesday, as entertained by the free persons of colour, through the medium of county meetings, to make known their grievances to the government of the mother country, and to petition His Majesty in council against giving the royal assent to the 'Privilege Bill,' which now has received the sanction of his representative in Jamaica. Will they admit they have been deceived in the disposition of the people they would continue to legislate for and oppress? Or will the meeting, held, on Tuesday last, in Kingston, and those about to be convened in this and other parishes, satisfy them of the abrogation of all confidence in the justice of the Colonial Government in the minds of the people of colour? Or will they need further manifestations to convince them and all those who have hitherto disputed it, that the seeming inertness of this numerous class of the population, was but the precursor of a more determined resistance to aggressive exclusion? The reiterated goadings of the people of colour—the disappointments heaped upon them, from time to time, by their oppressors, *may* at last induce them to reflect, that when 'the hereditary bondsman would be free, it is he himself must strike the blow;'—may lead them to compare their own condition, and that of their Haytian and Colombian fellows;

and once too often ask of themselves, if they possess less moral courage, or are curtailed of those requisites, by which the coloured population of Hayti and Colombia burst the yoke that at one time bore as heavily upon them, as it now miserably enthrals the persons of colour in Jamaica."

Without pretending to justify the fervour of some of these expressions, we nevertheless give them, as clearly marking the *signs of the times.**

V.—Abolition of Slavery in Mexico.

We are happy to be able to make known to our readers the following decree of the President of the Mexican United States, abolishing slavery in the whole extent of that Republic, which has recently been promulgated, viz.

"His Excellency the President of the Mexican United States to the inhabitants of the Republic, greeting,

"Desiring to signalise, in the year 1829, the anniversary of our Independence, by an act of national justice and beneficence that may turn to the benefit and support of such a valuable good—that may consolidate more and more public tranquillity—that may co-operate to the aggrandisement of the Republic, and return to an unfortunate portion of its inhabitants those rights which they hold from Nature, and that the people be protected by wise and equitable laws, in conformity with the 30th Article of the Constitutive Act—

"Making use of the extraordinary faculties which have been granted to the Executive, I thus decree :—

"1. Slavery is for ever abolished in the Republic.

"2. Consequently all those individuals who, until this day, looked upon themselves as slaves, are free.

"3. When the financial situation of the Republic admits, the proprietors of slaves shall be indemnified, and the indemnification regulated by a law.

"4. And, in order that the present Decree may have its full and entire execution, I order it to be printed, published, and circulated to all those whose obligation it is to have it fulfilled.

"Given in the Federal Palace of Mexico, on the 15th of September 1829.

"VICENTO GUERRERO.
"LAURENCE DE ZAVALA."

---

* In one place, alluding to the threat of the whites of Jamaica, to transfer their allegiance to the United States, the *Watchman* intimates that in such a case the free coloured and black population would resist. But supposing Jamaica to cease to be British, then, it is asked, whether "with Colombia on the one side, St. Domingo, (at whose name the Colonists shudder,) on the other, and Cuba, which, but for the interference of Great Britain, would have been as Colombia now is, it can be supposed that Jamaica would be long in following their example." *Watchman* of 6th February, 1830.

*** In a few days it is intended to publish, as a supplement to the present number, the proceedings of a recent general meeting of the Anti-Slavery Society of Dublin, as well as those of some friends of our cause in Yorkshire.

Bagster and Thomas, Printers, 14, Bartholomew Close.